

CLAIM AMENDMENTS

1. (Currently amended) A side impact protective apparatus for a motor vehicle occupant ~~which~~ that is incorporated into a door of a motor vehicle that includes an external sheet and a door interior element, said apparatus comprising:

a pressure gas source,

a covering ~~suspended with~~ including a downward projecting shoulder at its upper edge ~~on~~ that reaches behind a part of said door interior element and to suspend the covering from said door interior element, the covering including an upper edge side region, a lower edge side region, and a front face interconnecting the upper and lower edge side regions, and

a gas bag having respective longitudinal ends which can be inflated by the pressure gas source, the gas bag being folded together and arranged in a resting position along the upper edge side region of the covering, and, when inflated by the pressure gas source, releasing a suspension connection between said upper edge of said covering and said door interior element and exiting upwardly in a region of a side wall railing through a slot formed between the upper edge side region and a side window, thereby extending upward along an interior of the side window as impact protection for a head region of the occupant,

wherein the upper edge side region is connected to the lower edge side region along a connection line extending between spaced fastenings disposed at distances from said respective longitudinal ends of the gas bag,

wherein the connection line is disposed adjacent a lower gas bag edge,

wherein the connection line forms a pivot axis for the upper edge side region of the covering, and

wherein said front face includes a weakening defined therein adjacent the upper edge side region.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Previously presented) The side impact protective apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein one of the spaced fastenings, viewed in the direction of travel, is a frontally positioned fastening of the covering which adjoins an internally positioned door opener of the motor vehicle door.

4. (Previously presented) The side impact protective apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein one of the spaced fastenings, viewed in the direction of travel, is a rear-positioned fastening of the covering which is arranged adjoining the weakening defined in the front face.

5. (Previously presented) The side impact protective apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the weakening runs at least segmentally parallel to the external contour of the covering turned toward the passenger space.

6. (Previously presented) The side impact protective apparatus according to Claim 4, wherein the weakening is arranged at a slight distance from an arch-like external contour of the covering.

7. (Currently amended) The side impact protective apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the weakening is formed by ~~several~~ bore holes, wherein centers of the bore holes lie on a common, arch-like formed central line, and wherein a connection bar is arranged between two adjoining bore holes.

8. (Currently amended) The side impact protective apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the weakening is formed by slit-like openings.

9. (Canceled)

10. (Previously presented) The side impact protective apparatus according to Claim 4, wherein the rear-positioned face fastening and the weakening are covered by a superimposed protective cap.

11. (Original) The side impact protective apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein an embedded net-like fabric insert is provided inside a carrier element of the covering at least adjoining the side impact protective apparatus.

12. (Currently amended) The side impact protective apparatus according to Claim 3, wherein the weakening is formed by ~~several~~ bore holes, wherein centers of the bore holes lie on a common, arch-like formed central line, and wherein a connection bar is arranged between two adjoining bore holes.

13. (Currently amended) The side impact protective apparatus according to Claim 3, wherein the weakening is formed by slit-like openings.

14. (Canceled)

15. (Previously presented) The side impact protective apparatus according to Claim 3, wherein an embedded net-like fabric insert is provided inside a carrier element of the covering at least adjoining the side impact protective apparatus.

16. (Previously presented) The side impact protective apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the covering is a one-piece covering.

17. (Previously presented) The side impact protective apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the upper edge side region pivots about the pivot axis during gas bag deployment.

18. (New) A side impact protective apparatus for a motor vehicle occupant that is incorporated into a door of a motor vehicle that includes an external sheet and a door interior element, said apparatus comprising:

a pressure gas source,

a covering including a decorative layer oriented toward and visible from a passenger space of the vehicle, suspended with its upper edge on said door interior element, and including an upper edge side region, a lower edge side

region, and a front face interconnecting the upper and lower edge side regions, and

a gas bag having respective longitudinal ends which can be inflated by the pressure gas source, the gas bag being folded together and arranged in a resting position along the upper edge side region of the covering, and, when inflated by the pressure gas source, releasing a suspension connection between said upper edge of said covering and said door interior element and exiting upwardly in a region of a side wall railing through a slot formed between the upper edge side region and a side window, thereby extending upward along an interior of the side window as impact protection for a head region of the occupant,

wherein the upper edge side region is connected to the lower edge side region along a connection line extending between spaced fastenings disposed at distances from said respective longitudinal ends of the gas bag,

wherein the connection line is disposed adjacent a lower gas bag edge,

wherein the connection line forms a pivot axis for the upper edge side region of the covering, and

wherein said front face of said covering includes a weakening defined by openings or holes therein adjacent the upper edge side region.

19. (New) The side impact protective apparatus according to Claim 18, wherein the weakening is formed by bore holes, wherein centers of the bore holes lie on a common, arch-like formed central line, and wherein a connection bar is arranged between two adjoining bore holes.

20. (New) The side impact protective apparatus according to Claim 18, wherein the weakening is formed by slit-like openings.

21. (New) The side impact protective apparatus according to Claim 18, wherein an embedded net-like fabric insert is provided inside a carrier element of the covering at least adjoining the side impact protective apparatus.

22. (New) The side impact protective apparatus according to Claim 18, wherein the covering is a one-piece covering.

23. (New) The side impact protective apparatus according to Claim 18, wherein the upper edge side region pivots about the pivot axis during gas bag deployment.